(c) whether this stock is sufficient to meet the demand till next harvesting;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the preventive steps taken in this regard and also in regard to check price rise of essential foodgrains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The foodgrains stock in the Central Pool as on 1.1.2006 was as under:—

(Figures in lakh tonnes)

	Stocks
Wheat	61.88
Rice	126.41
Coarse Grains	4.31
TOTAL:	192.60

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The stock of foodgrains as on 1.1.2006 is sufficient to meet the demands till next harvesting, taking into consideration the average monthly requirement of 19 lakh tonnes of Rice and 14 lakh tonnes of Wheat under Targeted Public Distribution System, Welfare Schemes and Open Market Sales.

(e) In order to keep a check on rise in prices of essential foodgrains, Open Market Sales Schemes (Domestic) is being operated under which foodgrains are released in the market by Food Corporation of India (FCI) from time to time. In addition, a decision has been taken to import 5 lakh tonnes of wheat in the Southern Ports through the STC which would improve the domestic availability of wheat and help in stabilising wheat prices.

Strengthening Forward Markets Commission

34. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are thinking of amending the Forward Contract (Regulation) Act, 1952 to strengthen and restructure the Forward Markets Commission;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government are also thinking of amending the Forward Market Appellate Tribunal on the lines of Security Appellate Tribunal; and

(c) if so, the details of (a) and (b) above?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) It is proposed to introduce a Bill in the Parliament during the current session for amending the Forward Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1952 for, *inter alia,* strengthening and restructuring the Forward Markets Commission (FMC).

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The amendments proposed in the Forward Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1952, mainly relate to: (i) increasing the number of Members of FMC from four to nine with up to three whole-time Members and a Chairman; (ii) enhancing the powers of the FMC; **(iii)** conferring power upon FMC to recruit its officers and employees; (iv) creating FMC General Fund to which all receivables will be credited; and (v) registration of intermediaries with FMC. It is also proposed to designate the Securities Appellate Tribunal as the appellate authority for the puposes of the Forward Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1952.

Supply of sub-standard rice by FCI

†35. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the supply of substandard rice to the Southern States from the FCI godowns in Punjab;

(b) if so, the officers and rice mills found to be responsible for the same;

(c) the details of the action taken against the guilty officers and the rice mills responsible for it to compensate the loss suffered by the country;

(d) the details of incidents of fraud by officers and traders against FCI during the last five years; and

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.